12/30/75

Mr. Jim McKinley,
7309 NW Maple Lane
Kansas City, Mo. 64151

Dear Jim,

Phlebitis and a few extra struggles that fall to me because others can't or won't undertake them have kept me too busy during the shorter working day. I also have to shift from one position to another fairly often. And when the weather permits I take about three forced walks a day, needed for the healing of the legs as well as ending of the softening of muscles. So, I go from one thing to another. I wrap the books during rest periods, when I have the legs elevated. I use them as a workbench.

It does not give me much time for reading. That also is twixt and tween. I took your Lincoln piece with me when I went for the blood test yesterday. There is generally a half-hour wait plus 10 minutes of more to be certain there is no bleeding after the needle. Yesterday there was no wait and the hole closed nicely. So, I've read only the beginning. But I like it and I like the approach. (Maybe when the series is over there can be a bit more to make a book?) Reminds me of a book I researched and never had a chance to write: Bomb Baby Bomb: Violence is More American Than Cherry Pie. So, I think you did the essential in showing that we began as and have the tradition of a violent people.

The mail, around which my day centers now, is quite late today. No doubt because yesterday it was to begin being delivered an hour and a half earlier than before. I started to pick up the reading of the piece when several thoughts occurred to me. Thus I write, which permits the resting of the worse leg. Although forbidden the use of tools that can cut or bruise, when I could get no local carpenter or handyman to do it I made myself a pedestal typewriter table. Until I finished it yesterday I had to spread-eagle to type! An empty wooden case from Yquem wine plus a hunk of plastic complete the new office setup, which will have to be improved for the other leg.

(If you want to know how I've contrived to conserve time, I've gotten a cheap tape recorder and when I drive - only short distances - I listen to tapes I have to know by people of whom I have to know. I did that both ways yesterday. In the country one can stop to make written notes. If I had the money I'd get one of those tiny pocket-secretary machines and use it for note-making, without stopping. Remember the Chaplin movie, Modern Times?)

I've told Ann how to get the pictures of the documents that should be photographed for the JFK piece and other things that should help her and save her time. But I'm wondering, where they are so uptight, if it might not be a better idea for me to go to Washington that day and see to it that she gets the right thing and that the copies are made the right way. I will not do it on my own because I have no right to spend Playboy's money without authorization. Then, if there are other problems to address, I can do them at the same time. If this seems like a good idea, the middle of the month would be a good time for me. I should be more mobile then.

If she hasn't told you, she has photocopied here much more than she thinks they'll need for schmalz. I've also loaned her several books.

You have to look ahead a long time in an election year. So as of now - and what I'll be doing my best to outdate - it looks like the executive agencies are going to let more out, like a strategic retreat. It does not look like any of the current Congressional committees will accomplish anything. Most don't want to. But it anyone uses Post Mortem it can all explode. So also can it from at least two of the three suits I have in court, one on King. It is less of a possibility but a real one with the third, for the two full executive session transcripts still withheld and 10 pages of a third. One certainly deals with the KGB defector, Igor Nosenko. One may deal with the Commission's own knowledge of the medical evidence. I do not think it will add materially to what is in Post Mortem if I am correct. But the drama will have an enormous impact if it says anything like this.

If you keep me posted on your deadline I'll keep you up to date on the probabilities as best I can anticipate them.

Also, don't be deceived by the small stories you see infrequently in the papers about the supposed Kennedy attitude. Here I trust you with a confidence you are not to share with anyone, including any editor. For several years, as with Russell, I have had a confidential relationship with one of Teddy's people. They are of all kinds and prejudices. This one is honest. He knows the scoop. Thus, without it attracting any attention, Teddy's public posture has changed. He is saying what I recommended, that he has no reason not to trust the Warren Report or the Government and he feels the family should remain detached. But he has added his support to a new investigation if there is "new evidence" to justify it. That new evidence exists, in Post Mortem. If by some stroke (and the national desk bypassed Mo on this) it gets attention, it will be an entirely new situation.

I never mention this but I feel I owe you the understanding because of the situation you may have to anticipate with so long a lead time. I do suggest that regardless of the odds you write with the possibility of an explosion in mind.

If you have good connections on the KC papers or with their librarians there is a small favor you can do me. I'd like copies of the stories on Clarence Kelley's appointment of police chief. Only those that give his prior experience, the traditional ones. Where he has worked as an FBI agent, etc.

The date for my next medical appointment in Washington is not yet set. So, as of now, if you need me, the only time I know I will be away is the 15th, for a speech in North Carolina. Otherwise, except for a matter of hours, on errands, I'll be home.

hope you have a good year.

Sincerely,

Harold

P.S. I expect bud and Bob helped CBS and NYTimes finking on the MLK case. If there are stories you see, I'd appreciate copies.